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Pentagon Aide Hired By NASA

Associated Press

A former top Pentagon intelligence official was hired by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as an adviser just days before the Defense Department abandoned a major space spying program, leaving the space station project solely to NASA.

Although the civilian space agency denies that the firing of Dr. Eugene G. Fubini marks the beginning of a new effort is spying from space by NASA, Fubini has a background in electronic intelligence gathering.

Fubini was sworn in June 5 as a consultant to the administrator of the space agency with responsibility to review and advise on "scientific and engineering aspects of the agency's programs."

In 1963, President Kennedy appointed him Assistant Secretary of Defense and deputy director of defense research and engineering, positions he held for two years.

Early last year, the Associated Press reported that during his tenure at the Pentagon Fubini had been head of the super-secret National Security Agency, an arm of the Defense Department with responsibility for electronic spying, code-breaking and cryptanalysis.

One reliable source, in discussing the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, said that Fubini "probably knows more about what was going on in our electronic surveillance of North Vietnam then than any other man in Washington."

On June 10, five days after Fubini went to work full-time for NASA—leaving his post as vice president of IBM to do so—the Pentagon announced that the $3 billion Air Force Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL) program was being abandoned to save money. Basic research on the program overlapped research being done by NASA.

The MOL program would have carried an Air Force space station over Russia and Red China.